

In the Abstract:

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5

--Abstract

The tuner is a constituent component for constructing a tunable or switchable spectral filter, including single and multiple stage filters and filters without intermediate polarizer, over a wavelength range. It has elements arranged in cascade along a light beam axis including a dispersive polarization rotator that has its rotation angle  $\rho(\lambda)$  varying as a function of light wavelength  $\lambda$  over the wavelength range, an orientation-sensitive polarizing element and means for rotating the polarizing element or/and varying the rotation angle  $\rho(\lambda)$ . The polarization rotator and the polarizing element are arranged in series in the spectral filter along the light beam axis with the polarizing element oriented at a predetermined orientation angle related to the structure of the spectral filter. The tuner is operated by rotating the polarizing element to change its orientation in the filter or/and by changing the rotation angle  $\rho(\lambda)$ .